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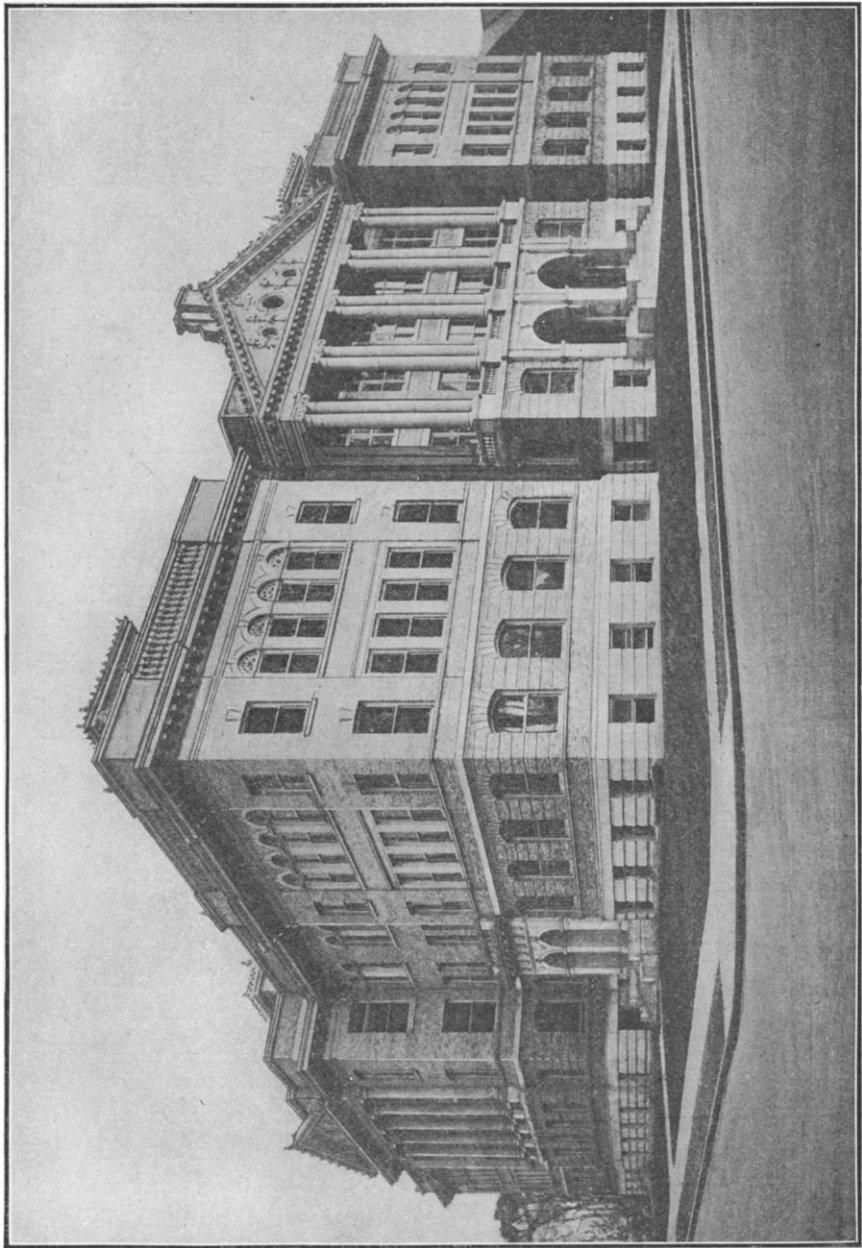
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THE NEW BUILDING OF THE SYRACUSE HIGH SCHOOL.

THE change from the old Syracuse High School building, outgrown, inconvenient, and altogether inadequate, to a brand-new building with modern arrangements and equipment for work, is so surprising and gratifying that I am at a loss to know how to express my sense of the greatness of that change. But while I can give only a dim notion of the inward satisfaction and inspiration of such a transition, I may be able to give in outline a few of the salient and material features of the new building.

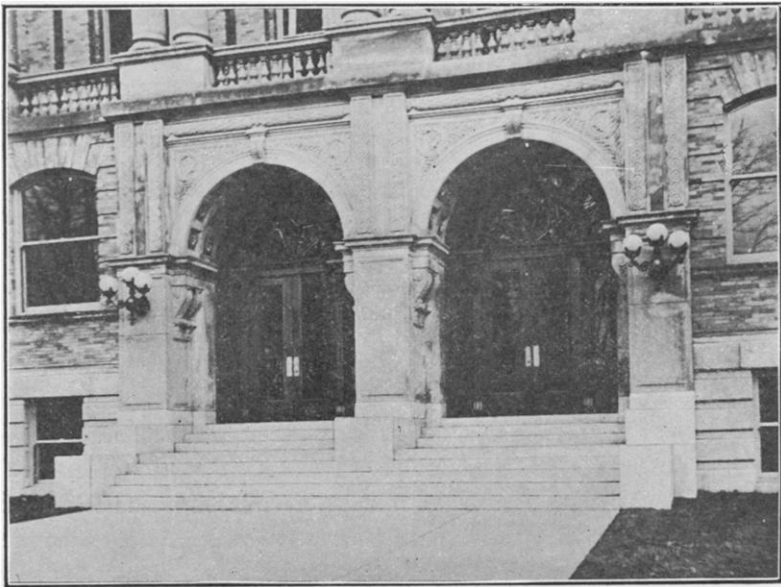
In the first place, it counts for much that the location of the building is so fine. It is quite away from "the madding crowd," and yet easy and convenient of access from every quarter of the city. It fronts on South Warren and South Salina streets, but between the two streets is a fine bit of green, called Billings Park. This little park keeps Salina street just far enough away to deaden the roar of the electric cars which run along that street from north to south of the city, yet leaves it near enough to land its young passengers, coming by single ticket or by transfer, within a half-minute walk of the entrance. The building fronts the west; on the north is East Adams street, with separate entrances for boys and girls to the main floor or basement; on the east is Linden street; on the south a driveway along which wheels are ridden to the basement doors.

The exterior is altogether noble in its proportions. Not highly ornate, it is still in most excellent taste, with an air of solidity and symmetry worthy of highest commendation. The slender-seeming yet strong and graceful columns take away from the front that appearance of "flatness" which mars so many fine and costly buildings. The pleasing effect of the front view is still further heightened by the fact that the building stands "in the open," as it were—with the width of two streets and a strip of park between it and the nearest houses to the west. A fair view of its outlines may be obtained from the accompanying cut.



THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, SYRACUSE, N. Y.

The front doors add so much to the general artistic appearance that I am tempted to show a picture of them, in the hope of making clear the large part which proper entrances play in the sum total of good architectural effect. Not only that, but large double doors, such as these and the doors on the north and south sides of the building, may be the means of saving precious lives in time of fire or panic.



But the real test of a good school building is not in the location or exterior so much as in the interior. A friend of mine was telling me this very morning of a fifty-thousand school building, fine in site and sight, but a downright failure in its internal arrangements. What a calamity to the community, and to the young student-life assembling there! With our building it is not so. The basement is as well adapted to certain purposes as the upper floors to other needs. In the basement, for instance, is the lunch-room—that indispensable adjunct of a single-session school. It is provided with a kitchen, a gas range, long counters, small tables, handy chairs, and stools. Students

may bring or buy their lunch, may eat it down stairs or up, may wash it down with water, milk, hot chocolate, or coffee. And, all in all, a pleasanter sight it would be hard to find than hundreds of happy boys and girls enjoying their "twenty minutes for refreshments."

In the basement also are large storage rooms for bicycles. Into these rooms the high-school commission hesitated to put racks or "holders," thinking that the craze for wheel-riding might soon be over. But the first spring days brought in the wheels by hundreds. Next week the racks go in. It does seem too bad to use so much space simply for storage purposes; yet wheels are valuable property in themselves and in the saving of time and car fare, and must be well housed.

The toilet-rooms are models of convenience, and are, in addition, supplied with water, mirrors, towels, and things needful for comfort and cleanliness. I was in a new school building a short time ago where such quarters had been cramped and narrowed to make room for a tiny gymnasium. The wisdom of that may well be seriously doubted. And the lockers are well worth a minute's notice. They are all in the basement—about eight hundred of them; each one built to accommodate the coats, cloaks, hats, etc., of two students. Each student is supplied with a key, for whose safe use and return he makes a small deposit, handed back to him when he delivers up the key. A teacher friend and I had many discussions over the locker question, he arguing for the convenience of having them along the corridors and in small inset rooms on the various floors. But that plan would use up much valuable space and quite lessen the attractiveness and openness of the much-traveled highways of the building.

Leaving the humble but useful basement, we walk by stair treads, noticeably easy of grade, to the first floor. Just across the corridor, and occupying a part of the south side of the building, is a room useful and ornamental—useful for teachers' meetings, and sufficiently ornamental for strangers visiting the school. In the latter case we call it a "reception room." On the western front, next to the teachers' reception room, is the clerk's office—well lighted and supplied with a typewriter made in this

city, a large work-table, extensive cases, a safe, a most convenient and serviceable desk, and a telephone; the latter not for the use of students. Opening out from this room, and between it and the corridor, the women teachers have their lockers and toilet-room. Beyond the clerk's room to the west are three rooms: one for the transaction of the general business of the

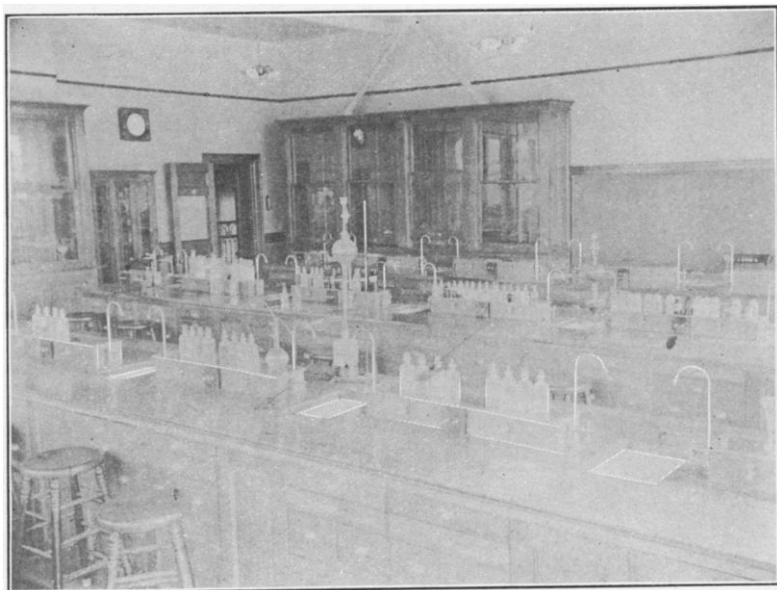
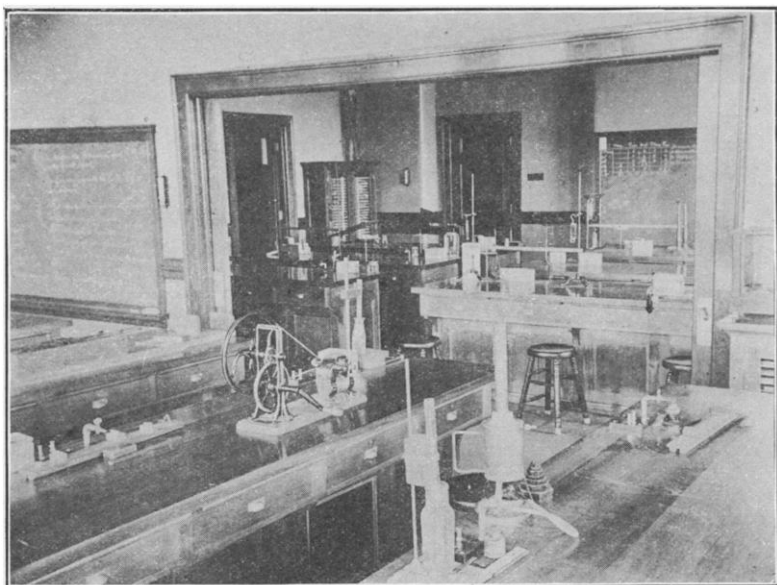


school; another, a waiting-room for students and patrons; the third room is the private office of the principal.

Passing out into the corridor on the first floor, we come upon the loggia, splendidly wrought in marble, set off by finely tinted walls. Here, fronting the visitor as he enters the building from the Warren street side, is a statue of Minerva, the gift of a graduate of the school. Beyond the loggia is a class-room, next a study-room, and across the corridor, on the north, two recitation rooms. This brings us to the library. But before we speak of that, it may be well to say a few words about these differing rooms. It is easy enough to say that a study-room should be used for study purposes only, a recitation room solely for recita-

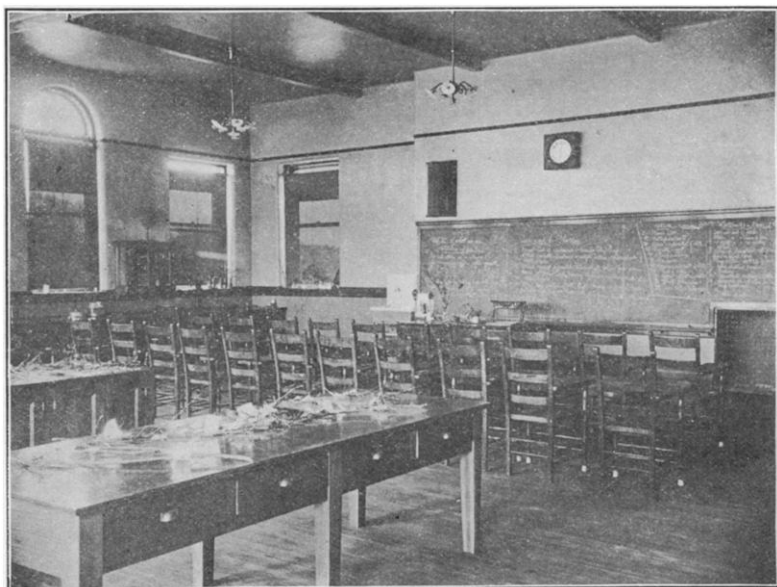
tions, and that a class-room should combine permanent seats for students with usefulness for recitations; but in what proportion to blend the three is no easy matter to decide. To the writer the ideal plan seems to be to have a sufficient number of study- and class-rooms to give a desk to each student and yet so figure and plan that no student will recite in a study-room nor be present in a class-room unless actually in a recitation at the time. In other words, send to study-rooms all students when not busy with their recitation work. With us a careful estimate makes the proportion of reciters to those in study-rooms at any given period about as 60 per cent. to 40. The study and class rooms are arranged with desks of a special pattern and size. The recitation rooms are furnished with chairs instead of benches—a bad arrangement, so at first I feared. But no; the chairs, strong and equipped with “arms” or “rests,” are not pushed about and in disorder, while the ease with which few or many can be used, and extra ones be removed or brought in, well fits the rooms to the size of individual classes. Let me add in passing that our rooms differ in size and, apart from any consideration of convenience, give a better effect than exact uniformity.

The library is on the first floor, just off from the north corridor. It has two entrances through alcove openings. The book-cases are of the best, and so indeed is all of the furniture, while the convenience of arrangement is very noticeable. The room that holds good books should certainly be made as attractive as possible, appealing to the eye and the sense of beauty. It should be large enough to hold the books of reading and of reference, with tables accommodating a goodly number of students, and with walls adorned with pictures and works of art. Here silence should reign, and every reader be made to feel that the time spent in such a place is sacred to the perusal of the best thoughts of the best minds, or at least to the gaining of such information as may be of service in a larger outlook and inlook upon worthy subjects of study. All these conditions and considerations have entered in no small degree into the daily life of this beautiful library room, a view of which accompanies this slight sketch.

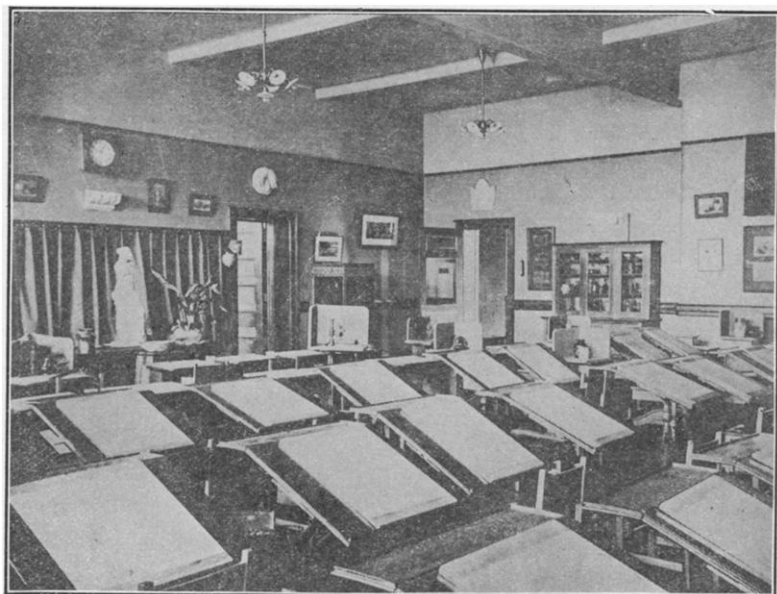


Many there are in these modern days and this modern land who put the laboratory and its uses before the library and its usefulness. This comes about, undoubtedly, through the strength and influence of that commercial feeling which led Mr. Gladstone, years ago, to assert that commercial supremacy was fast passing "from us to our brethren across the sea." Be this as it may, it is nowadays a matter of greatest practical importance that every high-school building be equipped with the best laboratories that money and skill can furnish. In our building the chemical, physical, and biological laboratories are on the third, or top, floor. Up there light and air are fine; all noxious fumes go out and up, and the conditions for work are quite ideal. Connected with the physical department is a lecture-room, filled with rows of raised seats, a table for experimental purposes, and a lantern. Of course, this room may be used for lectures or talks on any subject connected with school work, and is useful in bringing together in one compact body the classes that in daily recitations are made up of several divisions. In the chemical laboratory—and indeed in the physical and biological as well—students take two periods of consecutive work—thus combining textbook instruction with actual experimentation in the attempt to "learn by doing." If the valuable space of this magazine or the interest of the reader would allow, an inventory might be given of the varied and complex apparatus needful for daily service in these workshops. But here it must suffice to say that, although the accompanying pictures give but a very imperfect notion of the range and equipment of these rooms, still enough has been said to intimate the importance of the scientific department in secondary work, and also the way in which the effort has been made in the Syracuse High School to meet the requirements of our time and land for instruction in science work.

On the same floor with the laboratories are the two large rooms set apart for drawing. Here the light is from the north. The work is very varied, suited in as far as possible to the immediate and prospective needs of each student. That is to say, the science student makes mechanical drawings, the history student is taught map-drawing, and the general student is trained in



BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY.



many forms of free-hand, original, copy, and water-color work. It may be said just here that there is a curious difference—I had almost said *indifference*—on the part of high schools with respect to the matter of drawing. I know of a modern-built school in a large city where one small room with about twenty-five “boards” is all the provision made for that work. With us, I am happy to say, its importance is fully recognized, and hundreds of students are taught the use of the hand, eye, and above all the imagination.

Thus far in this article I have tried to give an outline of the building itself and of the various “rooms” in which the young workmen study, recite, or recreate. A few words must suffice now for a note on the ventilating system—a system so elaborate that many pages would be needed fully to describe it, and a dictionary at hand to explain the technical expressions used. Perhaps the best thing to do is to quote from an article by S. Homer Woodbridge, of Boston, who had in charge the heating and ventilating of the new building:

The entire system is such that the building can be warmed without being ventilated, and that it can be ventilated without being warmed, and that it can be warmed and ventilated either in whole or in part. That is, the two systems of heating and ventilating are entirely distinct and separate. The air can be supplied to one part of the building and excluded from the other by means of great dampers which are actuated by compressed-air mechanism, all of which are under the control of air-cocks located in the engineer's room.

To this well-put summary I need only add that the practical effects secured are fine. I never knew a large building so well heated, nor ventilation furnishing purer air.

More school buildings suffer from poor light than from any single cause. And I must confess that, as I followed the architect in the shaping of his plans, I felt great concern lest our building should be like the “shades of the prison-house, that close about the growing boy.” But the completed work has disproved my fears. Every room in which students sit is an outer room, the corridors are wide and well lighted, and a great light-shaft between the large assembly room and the three north corridors sends its welcome beams to both.

But inasmuch as there are many "gray days" throughout the year in our city—days when little outer light can come in because there is little to come—a very complete system of electric lighting has been put in. It works well. To see the assembly hall lighted is an inspiration; and I believe that the same light that dispels the gloom of a dark day quickens the impulse and power of the student to work.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF DRAWING.

Another great aid in our work is a telephone system which connects with every room in the building. From my office I can talk with any teacher at any time, or he with me; and the clerk may call for and receive back information concerning all details of absence, tardiness, reports, marks, and the like from the various study- and class-rooms. In the same breath with the telephones may be mentioned the automatic electric program clock, for the wires that connect with dials in each room (to announce the beginning and ending of each recitation period) are put into the same conduit with the telephone wires. I only add that when a program clock does its work constantly, accu-

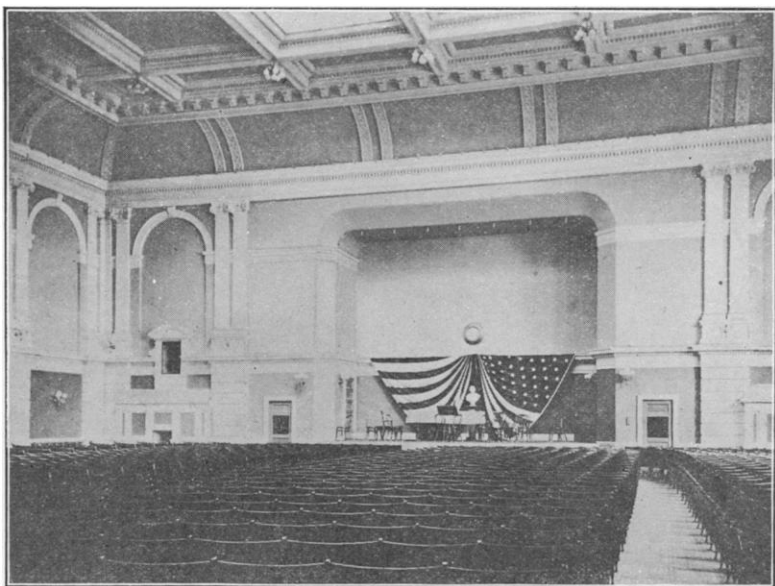
rately, unhitchingly, it is an unspeakable convenience; when it does not, but starts, halts, stops, it's—well, no matter. Ours does *not*, as yet.

The smallest, yet the most useful, room in the building is the emergency room, so called. To it are taken such teachers or students as are taken suddenly ill, and are in need of rest, quiet, or such restoratives as a well-furnished medicine-case can supply. In our old building, in an emergency case, we would have called for a bottle of ammonia from the chemist's room, and telephoned for a carriage, a doctor, and the mother.

It would not profit the reader to know about "the law's delays" and all the vicissitudes attending the legislation, beginning, progress, and completion of the new Syracuse High-School building. Nor would it be a safe guide for other cities to give the cost of the various parts that go to make up the sum total of expenditure for the building in this city. Take our case, for instance, as compared with that of Springfield, Mass. The money appropriated for our building was \$400,000; for theirs, \$400,000. Yet the capacity of theirs is about 800; of ours, 1,573.

Now I hasten to say, in closing, that it seems to me that the best justification of the existence and occupancy of the new building is found, not in the fact of the inadequacy of the old building, but in the hope of increased good to come to the cause of education and to the community at large. Edward Everett's academic statement is undoubtedly true: "Costly apparatus and splendid cabinets have no magical power to make scholars;" but good appointments certainly tend to bring and keep scholars under scholarlike influence. Thus our enrolment went up 225 at a bound, when the certainty of a change from old to new quarters was assured. And yet, again, it was a great gain and good to have a single session for all the school, instead of a hurried morning session for a part of the students and a dragging, tedious one till 4:30 P. M. for the rest. With this change, also, came recitation periods of adequate length, with five-minute breathing spells between, and a clear twenty minutes of intermission from study and books. With greater facilities for work

has come an enlarged and strengthened curriculum, embracing five distinct and separate courses, leading up to college, into professional schools, or out into life. It is greatly to the advantage of students to be able to get all the studies needful for entrance upon any of these three great spheres of educational activity. And toward this desirable preparation the new building itself is strongly contributing; for it is in a very great



LINCOLN HALL.

degree what may be termed a "workable" or "usable" building. How much this means to a good teacher only a teacher of that sort can tell. The better the workman, the better tools he must have; and even a poor teacher may find some impulse and profit in such a kit. Moreover, the students in the general assembly room get an acquaintance with each other such as they never had in the old building, where there was no such all-holding room. There is a help to patriotism in its very name, "Lincoln Hall," dedicated on the martyr's birthday with a magnificent oration by President Stryker of Hamilton College.

Indeed, from that day on the new building has been an inspirer. On February 23 a reunion of graduates was held. It proved to be the means of awakening pleasant memories of the old building and creating a fresh regard for the new. Through them the building has been adorned along the corridors and in the rooms with many pictures, busts, and casts. And their interest has been shared by the city at large. From many and diverse places, also, visitors have come in great numbers to see and "take notes." And thus it is that a thoroughly good school building is itself an educator. To this educator it has been my great pleasure to introduce the readers of the SCHOOL REVIEW.

W. K. WICKES.

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